

# Lunar New Year

## Foods, Family and Home



# Lunar New Year

Many countries around the world celebrate Lunar New Year. This holiday is also known as “Chinese New Year”.



# Lunar means 'moon'.

Lunar New Year does not fall on January 1<sup>st</sup> every year. Lunar New Year begins on the new moon of the new year. Celebrations can last 15 days long, until the full moon appears.



New Year's Eve and Day are important for everyone in the family.

Families get together. They honour their ancestors and give thanks to the departed relatives who were responsible for bringing good fortune to the family.



# Honouring the ancestors is important.

Ancestors are honoured on New Year's Eve with a dinner arranged for them at the family banquet table. The spirits of the ancestors, together with the living, celebrate the New Year.





# Foods are Important for a New Year's celebration.

Many different foods are eaten. Some foods are 'lucky' foods eaten to bring good luck and good fortune in the coming year.



# Special Foods

Fish is eaten whole. A whole fish served on a plate represents togetherness and abundance.



# Noodles

Noodles are served long. They are never cut before eating. Long noodles represent a long life.





Many customs and activities at New Year promote good luck and prosperity for the coming year. Children receive 'lucky money' in red envelopes from their parents and relatives.



Families prepare for the new year by cleaning, and then decorating their homes with fresh fruit, flowers and candy.



# House Cleaning

After the entire house is cleaned, it is ready for the New Year. Sweeping or dusting must not happen on New Year's Day for fear that good fortune will be swept away.





# Flowers

Decorating with flowers symbolize rebirth and new growth. When visiting friends, guests bring oranges. Oranges and tangerines are symbols of abundant happiness.





# Candy and Nuts

Candy trays are usually in a circle or octagon. It is called the 'tray of togetherness'. Peanuts symbolize 'long life'.



Lighting off firecrackers on New Year's Eve is one way of saying goodbye to the old year and welcoming the new year.

The firecrackers scare away the evil spirits while the lion welcomes good luck and good fortune.



On the 15th day of the New Year, on the night of the first full moon, celebrations end with the Lantern Festival.





People light lanterns to show respect to Buddha, set off fireworks, guess riddles written on the lanterns and often eat sticky rice balls, a symbol of family happiness.





# Check for Understanding

01. What does the word 'lunar' mean?
02. How long are Lunar New Year celebrations?
03. How do the people honour their ancestors at this time of the year?

04. What New Year's food represents 'togetherness'?

05. What New Year's food represents 'a long life'?

06. What do children receive in red envelopes?

07. What is suppose to happen if you clean your hours after New Year's day?

08. Why do homes display fresh cut flowers at this time of the year?

09. What do firecrackers and lions symbolize?

10. Where are lanterns usually hung?